

Testimony of AT&T, Sprint Nextel, T-Mobile and Verizon Wireless

Regarding House Bill 6652

"An Act Concerning the Use of Video Equipment in Motor Vehicles"

Transportation Committee

March 13, 2009

Senator DeFronzo, Representative Guerrero and members of the Transportation Committee, we hereby submit this testimony on behalf of AT&T, Sprint Nextel, T-Mobile and Verizon Wireless to seek clarification regarding the interpretation of House Bill 6652.

We applaud the efforts of this committee and wholeheartedly supports the safe use of electronic devices, including cell phones and video devices, while driving. We also support the intent of House Bill 6652. While the bill's objective appears to cover certain video display devices, we are concerned that the bill unintentionally captures devices already covered by C.G.S. Section 14-296aa, as amended by Public Act 05-220, commonly referred to as the driving while distracted statute.

For context, the legislature has defined mobile electronic devices in Subsection 8 as: "any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more persons, including a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital photographs are taken or transmitted, or any combination thereof, but does not include any audio equipment or any equipment installed in a motor vehicle for the purpose of providing navigation, emergency assistance to the operator of such motor vehicle or video entertainment to the passengers in the rear seats of such motor vehicle."

As such, the legislature has already enacted a law that promotes the safety objective sought to be achieved by this bill inasmuch as mobile electronic devices are concerned, and its application to such devices is not necessary and may be confusing.

To make this clarification, we request that when you favorably report the bill that you include the following amendment:

"(b) Nothing herein shall be construed to apply to mobile telephones, hand-held mobile telephones, hands-free mobile telephones, or other mobile electronic devices subject to the prohibitions set forth section 14-296aa of the general statutes."

Thank you for your consideration